Friendship Redefined

Week 6 Our love for one another.

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I want to circle back around to the new liturgy we introduced a few weeks back based on John 13:35.

Here is how it will work. I will say the first part and you can respond.

Worship leader:

How will they know that we are Christ’s disciples?

Congregation:

By our love for one another.

Just a reminder this whole series coincides with the book we produced for the church family. Each chapter aligns with the weekly sermons.

Let’s do a quick review so far.

Week One: We are made to be interdependent not independent.

Week Two: We are made for human touch.

Week Three: We need to learn to talk about what is really in us.

Week Four: We need to shift our attention to who is here.

Week Five: We need to learn to fight well.

Week 6: Our love for one another.

Lectio:

John‬

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Meditatio:

* What is loving one another? Love is “foot washing.”
  + The context of John 13 is powerful. Jesus engages with the disciples by washing their feet. This was not only an act of the servant in the home but truly a dirty job.
* Foot washing was a very real act of wiping the dirt off a guest's feet. It was also a metaphor for how we help our brothers and sisters deal with sin.
  + In Jesus‘s conversation with Peter and statements about Judas, it’s clear he is talking, not only about dirty feet, but sin. When dealing with each others’ hurts, habits, and hang-ups, we are to be charitable with the purpose of helping them honor the Lord.
  + “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me” (John 13:8 NIV), indicating a deeper, spiritual necessity beyond physical cleanliness. This interaction suggests that Jesus’ act of washing their feet was not only about literal cleanliness but also symbolized the cleansing of sin, pointing to the ultimate cleansing through His sacrifice on the cross. When Jesus tells Peter, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you” (John 13:10 NIV), it hints at the ongoing need for spiritual purification. Believers, having been cleansed through faith in Christ, still need continual cleansing from sin encountered in daily life, much like travelers in ancient times who, after bathing, would only need to wash their feet upon entering a house due to the dust and dirt of the roads.
* “Foot washing” is obedience to God.
  + This is modeled in Jesus’ road of the cross and explicitly stated by Jesus in this text. John 13:15 NIV, “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”
* “Foot washing” is a posture of service we are to take as we help people grow spiritually. Truth has the personality of charitable love.
  + Jesus assumes the role of the one who helps others. Helps them do what?
  + There are two ditches that Christians tend to lean into when helping each other with sin issues. You press into the truth without a heart of charitable love. Truth without love isn’t actually true. The other ditch is charity that doesn’t actually help people lean into truth. Charity without truth is actually the opposite of an actual charitable act.
* “Foot washing” is letting others help you live for Christ.
  + This is the hard one for me. I want to be self-sufficient. I want to not need others. I want to have enough intelligence, wealth, and vitality that I only sit in the place of the helper. We must all face our inner tendency to be like Peter. We don’t want to be helped.
* Who deserves this type of love? No one. Who gets it? Everyone.
  + We are all sinners saved by grace alone. Romans 3:23
  + Even Judas and Peter who Jesus knew would betray Him. John 13; Romans 5:8

Let’s explicitly state the obvious.

1. The power to save is Christ’s alone (Rom. 6:23) but He allows His followers to participate in His ongoing work. (Matt. 28:18-20; John 13:35)
2. You will be called to help others. You will need to be helped by others. We are to commit to help others. Even at personal cost. We need to be willing to receive help. Even in humility.
3. You don’t need to find Christians worthy of your help, you need to start by helping the Christians you’re already around.
4. This charitable way of helping others live for Christ will be a witness to a lost world. (John 13:35)

Application.

Will you commit to serve and be served by a Christian community?